

*The travel industry contributes \$704.4 billion to the country's economy and employs 7.7 million Americans*

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**Washington, DC** – Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel) will be joined by Congressman Jo Bonner (R-Mobile), as Co-Chair of the Congressional Travel & Tourism Caucus (CTTC) for the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress. The Congressional Travel & Tourism Caucus' mission is to support and develop national policy that promotes domestic and international travel to the United States.

“The US is home to some of the most pristine and exciting tourist destinations in the world,” said Congressman Sam Farr. “Tourism is an economic engine that will continue to play a vital role in stimulating our local economies. I look forward to working with Congressman Bonner and the rest of the caucus to advance an agenda that promotes the industry and creates much needed jobs across our country.”

“Tourism and travel are significant jobs providers for every corner of America. Too often, the travel industry's impact isn't fully appreciated until a disaster strikes and the resulting loss of tourist dollars is felt throughout local economies, from hotels and restaurants to schools.

Many Gulf Coast communities suffered such losses first hand during last year's oil spill.

I am honored to join Rep. Farr as co chair of the Travel and Tourism Caucus during the 112<sup>th</sup>

Congress, and I look forward to bringing a renewed focus to America's great potential as the world's travel destination,” said Congressman Jo Bonner.

Mr. Farr has served as co-chair of the Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus since 1997. His district on California's Central Coast encompasses the Monterey Bay region, where the travel industry generates over \$2 billion for the local economy.

Mr. Bonner previously served as an active member of the caucus, and represents Alabama's fast-growing six-county Gulf Coast region where tourist and travel expenditures total \$3.2 billion.

The travel caucus, which consisted of more than 100 members in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, works to develop and support legislation that promotes the nation's travel and tourism industry, as well as fosters communication between lawmakers and travel leaders. In its latest figures, the U.S. Travel Association estimated that the travel industry contributed \$704.4 billion to the economy and employed 7.7 million people.

Last Congress, the caucus was busy supporting the Travel Promotion Act, which passed both Chambers of Congress and was signed by the President in February 2010. The new law is working to promote the U.S. as a premier travel destination and better explain travel policies—making it easier for tourists to visit the many tourist destinations the U.S. has to offer.

The Congressional Travel & Tourism Caucus was founded in 1979, and over the years has diligently worked to promote issues vital to the well being of the travel and tourism industry. The caucus works to educate Congressional Members and staff on the importance of securing a vibrant tourism industry for all 50 states, which generates \$113 billion for local, state and federal governments.

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